

## Public Awareness and Media Campaign

November 2004

### Tobacco Facts

Two out of three youth in 2002 remember seeing or hearing an anti-tobacco ad in the past week.

Nine out of 10 youth who had seen Department of Health anti-tobacco ads said the ads had given them good reasons not to smoke.

The major tobacco companies are estimated to spend approximately \$250 million a year to advertise and promote their products in Washington. That advertising has shaped a youth culture that views tobacco use as glamorous, grown-up, and rebellious. Today, 55 young people in our state will start smoking every day, and one-third of them will die early as a result. The Department of Health's public awareness and media campaign is an essential part of its comprehensive program to counter tobacco industry messages and drive down tobacco use.

### Campaign history

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Program began running advertisements using a variety of media in October 2000. Currently, there are three campaigns, each directed at different audiences:

- A prevention campaign targeting youth, ages 8-18, to discourage them from beginning to use tobacco.
- A quit campaign targeting adult tobacco users.
- An education campaign targeting parents who smoke around their children to inform them of the dangers of secondhand smoke.

### Preventing kids from beginning tobacco use

The first youth campaign, "It's the truth. It's an outrage," featured radio and television ads that had been used effectively in other states. In January 2002, the Tobacco Program created its own "Tobacco smokes you" advertisements with the help of advertising and public relations experts who tested the effectiveness of messages with Washington kids. The ads feature a hard-hitting, fact-based approach. In addition to advertisements, the Tobacco Program hosts a Web site, [UnfilteredTV.com](http://UnfilteredTV.com), which educates kids about the dangers of tobacco use and encourages them to become active participants in the battle against tobacco companies. The program also hosts other activities designed to educate youth about the dangers of smoking.

### Encouraging adults to quit

In June 2002, the Tobacco Program launched a made-for-Washington advertising campaign that promoted the Washington Tobacco Quit Line. In addition, the Tobacco Program created the Web site, [Quitline.com](http://Quitline.com), to allow visitors to listen to a sample call to the quit line, read stories from people who have quit tobacco successfully, learn about the physical changes they can expect once they stop using tobacco, and meet some of the Washington Tobacco Quit Line specialists.

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## Secondhand smoke campaign

In December 2002, the program launched a secondhand smoke campaign that featured ads developed by other states. The ads were designed to educate people about the dangers of breathing secondhand smoke and especially the dangers to children. In addition, the Web site, [Secondhandsmokesyou.com](http://SecondhandSmokesYou.com), was launched in December 2002 to increase awareness of the dangers of secondhand smoke and promote policy change.

Visit the youth Web site at:  
[UnfilteredTV.com](http://UnfilteredTV.com)

Find out more about  
secondhand smoke:  
[SecondhandSmokesYou.com](http://SecondhandSmokesYou.com)

Find out more about the  
Tobacco Quit Line at:  
[quitline.com](http://quitline.com).

For more information on  
tobacco prevention:  
[www.doh.wa.gov/tobacco](http://www.doh.wa.gov/tobacco)

## Media advocacy activities support youth media campaign

To reinforce the messages in the media campaign, the Tobacco Program supports a variety of innovative activities and efforts.

- ***Unfiltered: On the Web, in schools, and on television.*** The Tobacco Program's made-for-the Web reality series, *Unfiltered*, follows five Washington teens as they attempt to quit smoking during a weekend in Seattle. In the process they learn a lot about the health effects of tobacco and how tobacco products are marketed to teens. This video is on the youth Web site, was broadcast on television, and is used in schools.
- **Unfiltered You art contest.** The Unfiltered You contest, featured on the youth Web site in 2002, asked kids to create original pieces of art that describe tobacco use in their families, schools, and hometowns. More than 100 pieces of art were entered, with the best selected for an exhibit that traveled to shopping malls statewide.
- **Road tour.** In 2002, a youth road tour traveled to 23 rural counties delivering the anti-tobacco message to kids in order to increase the presence of anti-tobacco messages in remote areas that have fewer forms of traditional media. The road tour crew visited schools, skating rinks, sporting events, malls, and other places kids hang out to talk with them about why using tobacco is a bad idea.

## A comprehensive approach to fighting tobacco use

Research shows that state anti-tobacco programs must be broad-based and comprehensive to be effective. In addition to conducting public awareness and media campaigns, Washington's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program supports programs in communities and schools, provides services to help people quit, encourages smoke-free environments, restricts the ability of kids to get tobacco, and evaluates the effectiveness of state and local program activities.